

IN THE CLAIMS:

Claim 1 (currently amended) An ink for ink jet recording, comprising at least a water-soluble colorant, a water-soluble organic solvent, water, and a mixture of two or more compounds represented by formula (I):



wherein

EO represents an ethyleneoxy group;

PO represents a propyleneoxy group;

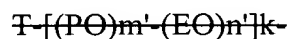
T represents an OH group or SO₃M wherein M represents a hydrogen atom, an alkali metal, an inorganic base, or an organic amine;

m and n are each an integer;

k is a natural number of not less than 1; and

R represents

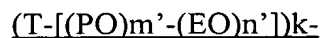
~~a C₄₋₁₀ branched or straight chain alkyl group or a group comprising Ra bonded to a C₄₋₁₀ branched or straight chain alkyl group, wherein Ra represents a group represented by the following formula:~~



~~a CaH_{2a+2-k} group where "a" represents natural number of 4 to 10,~~

~~an Ra-CaH_{2a+1-k} group where "a" represents natural number of 4 to 10 and Ra~~

~~represents a group represented by the following formula:~~



wherein

EO, PO, T and k each are as defined above; and

n' and m' are respectively n and m,

EO and PO being arranged, regardless of order in the parentheses, randomly or as blocks joined together,

n or n + n' being 1 to 10 with m or m + m' being 0 to 5 when n and m and n' and m' are expressed in terms of the average value for the mixture of compounds represented by formula (I) contained in the ink.

Claim 2 (previously presented) The ink according to claim 1, wherein the compounds, represented by formula (I), constituting the mixture each are such that T represents an OH group.

Claim 3 (previously presented) The ink according to claim 1, wherein the compounds, represented by formula (I), constituting the mixture each are such that T represents an OH group.

Claim 4 (currently amended) The ink according to claim 1, wherein the compounds, represented by formula (I), constituting the mixture each ~~are~~ is such that R represents a $\text{C}_a\text{H}_{2a-k} + \text{C}_a\text{H}_{2a+2-k}$ group and T represents SO_3M .

Claim 5 (previously presented) The ink according to claim 1, wherein the compounds, represented by formula (I), constituting the mixture each are such that EO represents $-\text{CH}_2\text{CH}_2\text{O}-$, PO represents $-\text{CH}(\text{CH}_3)-\text{CH}_2\text{O}-$, and T represents an OH group, R, EO,

PO, and T being attached to one another in that order to represent formula R-(EO)_n-(PO)_m-T.

Claim 6 (previously presented) The ink according to claim 1, wherein the mixture of compounds represented by formula (I) is composed of:

a compound represented by formula (I) wherein T represents an OH group, R, EO, PO, and T being attached to one another in that order to represent formula R-(EO)_n-(PO)_m-T; and

a compound represented by formula (I) wherein T represents an OH group, R, EO, PO, and T being attached to one another in that order to represent formula R-(PO)_m-(EO)_n-T.

Claim 7 (original) The ink according to claim 1, wherein n and m in the mixture of compounds represented by formula (I) satisfy $n/m \leq 0.5$.

Claim 8 (original) The ink according to claim 1, wherein the compound represented by formula (I) has an average molecular weight of not more than 2000.

Claim 9 (original) The ink according to claim 1, wherein the mixture of compounds represented by formula (I) is composed of:

a compound represented by formula (I) wherein R represents a butyl, pentyl, hexyl, heptyl, octyl, nonyl, or decyl group; and

a compound represented by formula (I) wherein R represents a butyl, pentyl,

hexyl, heptyl, octyl, nonyl, or decyl group.

Claim 10 (currently amended) The ink according to claim 1, wherein R represents a straight-chain C_r-C_{+0} or branched C_aH_{2a+2-k} group.

Claims 11 and 12 (Cancelled)

Claim 13 (original) The ink according to claim 1, which further comprises 0 to 10% by weight of (di) propylene glycol monobutyl ether.

Claim 14 (original) The ink according to claim 13, wherein the weight ratio of the compound represented by formula (I) to (di) propylene glycol monobutyl ether is 1 : 0 to 1 : 10.

Claim 15 (original) The ink according to claim 1, which further comprises 0 to 5% by weight of an acetylene glycol surfactant.

Claim 16 (original) The ink according to claim 15, wherein the weight ratio of the compound represented by formula (I) to the acetylene glycol surfactant is 1 : 0 to 1 : 3.

Claim 17 (original) The ink according to claim 1, which further comprises 0 to 20% by weight of di(tri) ethylene glycol monobutyl ether.

Claim 18 (original) the ink according to claim 17, wherein the weight ratio of the compound represented by formula (I) to di(tri)ethylene glycol monobutyl ether is 1 :0 to 1 :10.

Claim 19 (original) The ink according to claim 1, wherein the water-soluble colorant is a water-soluble dye and/or a water-soluble pigment dispersible in water.

Claim 20 (original) An ink jet recording method comprising the steps of: ejecting a droplet of an ink; and depositing the droplet onto a recording medium to perform printing, wherein the ink is one according to claim 1.

Claim 21 (original) A recorded medium recorded by the ink jet recording method according to claim 20.

Claim 22 (previously presented) The ink according to claim 1, wherein R represents a branched C₄-C₁₀ group.